

# HPV Vaccine: A Guide for Parents

*Nothing is more important than the health of your child.*

## What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV)?

- Most common sexually transmitted disease in the U.S.
- More than half of males and females are infected by HPV at some point in their life.
- Most of the time, HPV resolves on its own. For some, it can progress to genital warts and cancers.

## How can you get it?

- Exposure to the virus can happen with any kind of sexual contact, not just intercourse.
- There are few signs and symptoms, making the virus hard to detect. Spreading of the virus can occur unknowingly.

## Preventing HPV – Gardasil Vaccine

- Gardasil is a vaccine that prevents against HPV.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends routine vaccinations for females ages 11-26 and males ages 9-26.
  - **Jefferson County Health Department offers free vaccines for individuals up to age 18.**

## Why Gardasil now?

- Gardasil works to prevent infection *before* exposed to the virus, it is more effective *before* sexual contact.
- Although your child may not be sexually active now, you have the chance to help protect your child for the future.



## How to learn more:

- Ask your doctor.
- Visit the CDC at [www.cdc.gov/std/hpv](http://www.cdc.gov/std/hpv)
- Call your local health department
  - Jefferson County Health department (920) 674-7275 or visit <http://www.jeffersoncountywi.gov/jc/public/jchome>
  - Information supported by Gardasil website: [www.gardasil.com](http://www.gardasil.com)